



"O Lord, You alone are my hope . . ."
Psalm 71:5 NLT

FOCUS Online Newsletter

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FOCUS Ministries is a not-for-profit organization (501c3) devoted to offering hope, encouragement, education, and assistance to women who are struggling in difficult circumstances, especially abusive relationships, dysfunctional marriages, separation, and divorce.

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Are You Sick and Tired?

"Are you tired of the way the world is turning? Are you tired of the way your life has gone? Do you long for some joy instead of weeping?"

As I heard those words being sung, I wanted to stand up and shout with great passion, "Yes! Yes, I'm tired and I'm not going to take it anymore!"

I'm tired of the evil in this world—evil that threatens, slaps and punches; evil that hurls missiles of verbal abuse; evil that delights in dominating and demeaning others in order to make oneself feel more powerful and important.

I'm tired of injustice—watching helplessly as the perpetrator goes free without consequences while the victim struggles to regain sanity and safety.

I'm tired of lying lips and winking eyes—tools used by schemers who are so adept at distorting and manipulating the truth that even the wisest counselor is fooled by their charm.

I'm tired of flattery and cheap repentance—words with hidden meanings and insincere sentiments which cannot be trusted.

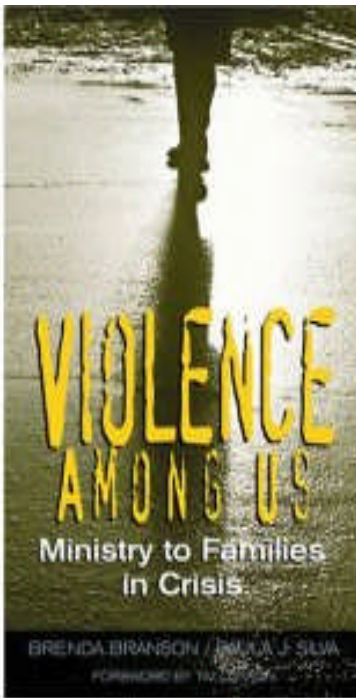
I'm tired of waiting for God to intervene—to make right out of wrong and vindicate those who are falsely accused.

I'm tired of being tired!

Then I'm reminded of who to turn to in my frustration and despair. When I gather all of my burdens and cares, financial woes, broken dreams, failures, and all of my worries and anxiety, Jesus will carry them for me while I rest in His promise to sustain me and direct my steps.

(Continued on page 2)

The mission of FOCUS Ministries, Inc. is to encourage women who are struggling in difficult circumstances to find strength and hope in Jesus Christ.



This new book written by Brenda Branson and Paula Silva offers practical help in identifying abusive situations. It has strategic counseling tips, case studies and models of effective ministry to both the victim and the perpetrator. There are resource lists which include domestic violence hotlines and shelters, faith-based organizations, abuser treatment programs, and information on legal and safety issues.

Review by Lydia Lee:

“How sad that this book is so badly needed, especially in the Christian community. But it is. Every pastor, every counselor, every Sunday School teacher, and every parent should know and understand the content of this excellent, practical, and powerful book. I'm buying a copy for my pastor.”

***Violence Among Us* can be purchased online through our website at www.focusministries1.org.**

Here is God’s promise to Moses (*and you!*): “*I will personally go with you . . . I will give you rest . . .*” (Exodus 33:14 NLT)

Jesus said, “*Come unto me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.*” (Matthew 11:28 NLT)

King David gave this advice: “*Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him. Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.*” (Psalm 37:7 NKJV)

Are you tired?

Would you like to rest in the arms of someone who truly loves you?

He is waiting with open arms for you to come—no strings attached. You don’t have to clean up your life before you come. His love doesn’t require you to be beautiful—His love *makes* you beautiful and clean.

Now just because you’re nestled in the arms of the Father who loves you doesn’t mean your problems and pain will magically disappear. God may not choose to calm the storm around you, but He will calm your heart as He holds you close and walks with you through the storm.

Don’t ever forget . . . the One who laid the foundation of the earth, who defined the boundaries of the seas, who commanded the morning to appear in the east, who controls the winds and waves by His words, “Peace, be still,” who commands the symphony of lightning and thunder, who gives you the very breath that keeps you alive—He can be trusted with every detail of your life.

You can rest assured that His power is strong enough and His grace is sufficient to help you face all the uncertainties in life that lie ahead of you.

*“You can rest upon Him
When your measure of faith is spent
You can rest, you can rest upon Him.¹”*

¹ Words by Allison Durham; music by Allison Durham and Brian Spear; Recorded on *Walk Into Freedom* by Allison Durham, 1993, Star Song

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Resistance to Boundaries

Boundaries are necessary for healthy relationships, according to Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend. But setting boundaries is hard work because you may encounter resistance from others.

The most common resistance from others is **anger**. Here are some ways to deal with anger:

- ◆ Plan your reaction ahead of time by anticipating what the angry person will say; stay calm and resolve to control your own emotions.
- ◆ Don't try to rescue an angry person from his anger.
- ◆ Use physical distance, if necessary, to avoid verbal and physical abuse.

Another common resistance is **guilt**. You may hear messages like, "How could you do this to me after all I've done for you?" Here are some ways to deal with guilt:

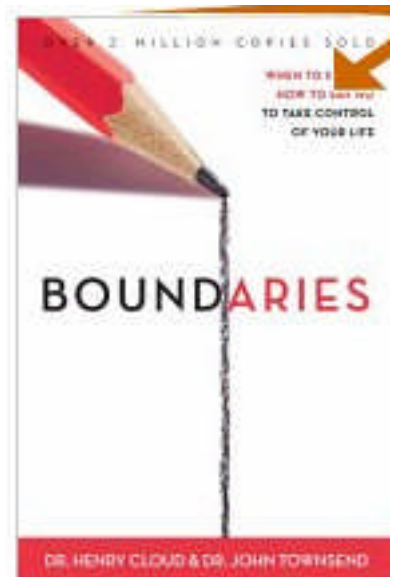
- ◆ Know the difference between honest feedback and guilt messages. Guilt messages serve to manipulate and control you. Ask trusted friends who really know you to help you discern the difference.
- ◆ Guilt messages may be a smokescreen hiding anger, hurt, and sadness that another person doesn't want to admit. Empathize with their feelings, but don't take their blame.

Setting boundaries may cause **pain or hurt feelings**. When this happens, ask yourself, "Am I setting limits to be mean or get revenge?" Do not play God with boundaries. The only reason to set boundaries is for the good of the relationship, the other person, and yourself—never for personal pettiness or revenge.

If you encounter **physical abuse** when setting limits, seek help immediately. You are not helping the abuser by protecting him.

When you face resistance in setting healthy boundaries, don't despair. It may be a sign that you are doing the right thing.

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To purchase **Boundaries** and other great resources go to:

<http://cloudtownsend.com>

You'll also enjoy free video clips on these topics:

- ◆ Dating
- ◆ Emotional Struggles
- ◆ Goals and Success
- ◆ Leadership
- ◆ Marriage
- ◆ Parenting
- ◆ Relationships
- ◆ Spiritual Life

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Ways You Can Partner With Us!

▶ Pray!

- Pray for us to follow God's leading as we pursue new opportunities to help hurting people.
- Pray for the finances to provide free literature and books wherever needed.
- Pray for funding for full-time salaries for FOCUS employees.
- Pray for leaders of existing support groups, and for others to start new groups throughout the country.

▶ Volunteer

- ◆ Can you read and write *Spanish*? We need someone who will translate our current and future materials into Spanish using Microsoft Word.
- ◆ Are you a professional *grant writer*? We need several people who will research and write grant proposals.
- ◆ Are you creative and experienced in *fund raising* or *public relations*? We need people throughout the country who can represent FOCUS and help us raise funds.

▶ Donate Books, Audio tapes, Videos and DVDs

If you have *books, tapes, or videos* gathering dust on your bookshelves, we can use them in our Kentucky Women's Center library (for children, teens, and adults). We will provide you with a tax-deductible receipt.

▶ Wal-Mart Gift Cards

Your donation of Wal-Mart gift cards help women in need throughout the U.S. Please send gift cards to FOCUS Women's Center, P. O. Box 323, Hanson, KY 42413 or FOCUS Ministries, Inc., P. O. Box 2014, Elmhurst, IL 60126.

▶ Donations

Donations can be made by mailing a check or money order to FOCUS, P. O. Box 2014, Elmhurst, IL 60126. To use a credit card, log on to our website at www.focusministries1.org and make a one-time donation or sign up to contribute monthly through PayPal. With this option, you will be certain that FOCUS receives your support on a consistent basis. The PayPal shopping cart system will state "subscription" and your monthly donation will be charged to your credit card once a month.

▶ Matching Gifts

Does your employer have a matching gift program? If so, think about contributing to FOCUS Ministries and having your gift matched by your employer.

▶ Year-End Gift

The end of the year is a great time to consider giving a special gift to help FOCUS Ministries reach out to hurting women all over the world. All year-end donations must be post-marked by December 31.

*All gifts are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law. Tax-deductible receipts will be provided to all contributors. Contributions are solicited with the understanding that FOCUS Ministries has complete control over the use of all donated funds. Gifts designated for a specific project will be applied to that project. If we receive more contributions than can be wisely applied to that project, we will use the excess funds to meet a similar pressing need. **If it is not possible for you to make a contribution at this time, please lift us up before the Lord in prayer. He is our source and our resource. We rest in the assurance that our lives and this ministry are in His hands.***

